

WEEKLY REPORT
Region 9
Environmental Protection Agency
Week of January 20, 2012

I. Highlights of the Past Week

California

Combustion SIP rules: On January 18, the direct final approval for Imperial County APCD and Antelope Valley AQMD's gas turbine rules was published. On January 19, the final limited approval, limited disapproval of Placer County APCD's biomass boiler rule was published. This rule directs Placer to lower emission limits to fulfill Clean Air Act RACT requirements.

PCB Cleanup Completed in Brawley, CA The Former Rio Vista Electric Substation has achieved all PCB cleanup objectives, allowing reuse of this half acre site. Because the site is adjacent to Phil D. Swing Elementary School, EPA directed Imperial Irrigation District (IID) to conduct a rapid response and clean up the site prior to school starting last fall. The cleanup accomplished in eight days, removing 4,350 tons (~200 truck loads) of PCB contaminated soils at a cost of approximately \$690,000. IID intends to donate the site to the Brawley Elementary School District to extend the existing playgrounds at the adjacent elementary school.

San Joaquin Agriculture Rules: On January 17, EPA's final action approving SJV Rules 4570 (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) and 4565 (Biosolids, Animal Manure, and Poultry Litter Operations) was published in the Federal Register. Rule 4570 is projected to reduce 25 tons/day of emissions and Rule 4565 establishes the most stringent requirements in the country.

Nevada

Visit by Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP) Region 9 approved the Nevada Regional Haze SIP with the exception of the NO_x BART determination for Reid-Gardner Generating Station. In order to complete the Reid-Gardner NO_x BART determination by the consent decree deadline, the Agency needed additional information from NDEP. Region 9 requested this information from NDEP in December 2011. NDEP plans to come to San Francisco next week to discuss their progress on responding to EPA's information request.

Pacific Islands

FRC Presentation on Omnibus Territories Act The Region 9 Pacific Islands Office provided a presentation to a meeting of the Federal Regional Council (FRC) on January 18 about the Omnibus Territories Act (OTA) and EPA's successful approach to grants management in the Pacific territories using the authorities provided under the Act. Several federal agencies expressed interest in learning more about EPA's approach to improve their own grant management procedures in the territories. EPA is the only member of the FRC to take advantage of the tools offered by the OTA to improve grant management efficiency at both the federal and local level and to allow territories access to funding they might not otherwise be able to qualify for.

Navajo Generating Station (NGS): On January 18, the Department of Interior released the report it commissioned from the Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Lab, examining options to control NOx emissions from NGS. The report made no recommendations to EPA on what control option EPA should propose as BART. The report determined that costs of installing selective catalytic reduction (SCR), the most effective NOx controls, would be lower than closing the facility and replacing the power with unused capacity from elsewhere in the West, and that the greatest burden of any new control option would fall most heavily on the Central Arizona Project and its water users. The report projected an increase in water rates to Tribes and agriculture of 13 - 16% if SCR were required as BART, and twice that if baghouses and sorbent injection were required in addition to SCR to comply with other regulatory requirements, i.e., the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard or pre-construction Prevention of Significant Deterioration permitting.

II. Press Stories, Significant Policy, Regulatory, or Legal Actions

San Joaquin Valley Whistle Stop Tour: RA Jared Blumenfeld will tour the San Joaquin Valley January 24 to 26 to highlight the activities and goals in the Agency's 2012 Strategy for the Valley, which will also be released next week. Tour events include a DERA press event in Stockton, an almond handling facility in Modesto, an award presentation to a chrome plating facility, stops at UC Merced and CSU Fresno, and a number of stops with communities in Oroquieta and Seville related to drinking water issues.

Regional Administrator to Visit Fresno Area Tribes RA Jared Blumenfeld will be visiting 5 Tribes in the Fresno area on January 26 and 27. Tribes included in the visit are the Picayune Rancheria, Northfork Rancheria, Cold Springs Rancheria, Big Sandy Rancheria and Table Mountain Rancheria. He will be meeting with tribal council members and tribal chairs to discuss the Tribe's environmental issues, challenges and priorities.

Nancy Stoner Visit Acting Assistant Administrator for Office of Water, Nancy Stoner, and the OW Directors will conduct a water program review in Region 9 on January 25-26, 2012. Concurrent with the OW program review, on January 25th Nancy Stoner and Region 9 staff will meet with California Department of Health, CSU Fresno-Center for Irrigation Technology and join the RA for the community tour. Also, a site visit to a SRF-ARRA green infrastructure project is being arranged for the morning, January 27th.

Public Hearing on Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards: EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration are holding the third of three public hearings on the 2017 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards in San Francisco on January 24. On January 26, the California Air Resources Board will hold its public hearing to consider amendments to the California's greenhouse gas emissions standards. EPA has worked very closely with CARB to harmonize our rules so the manufacturers can have a single national program combining GHG and fuel economy standards.

Columbus Manufacturing Consent Decree Lodging of the Consent Decree settling our CAA §112(r) action is scheduled for January 30. The consent decree is currently with OECA Assistant Administrator Giles for signature. In the settlement, Columbus agreed to install a safer refrigeration system using glycol and ammonia and pay a penalty of \$685,446. Columbus is close to completing the installation of the new system. Region 9 is coordinating a press event

FRC Pacific Islands Meeting March 1-2 The Governors of Guam, CNMI, and American Samoa will take part in a Federal Regional Council meeting in San Francisco on March 1-2. The Presidents of Palau, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia may also participate. A half-day group meeting on March 1 is expected to be followed by meetings with individual agencies over the next day and half.

Proposed Hydro Resources Inc. (HRI) Mining on Navajo Nation Region 6, Region 9, and the Navajo Nation have agreed to a joint consultation meeting on March 15 in Albuquerque regarding the Tribe's concerns about HRI's proposal to conduct uranium solution mining on State of New Mexico land. With a firm consultation date set, Region 9 is renewing internal EPA discussions regarding the status of an aquifer exemption that HRI requires for their project. The Agency is scheduled to talk with OW management about this issue during next week's Regional Water Program review.

Water Operator Training Dates Announced for Territories EPA OWM this week announced the availability of Water and Wastewater Operator Training in Guam March 7-9, and in Saipan March 12-14. EPA will be providing the territories the same training it has provided successfully to numerous tribal water operators in the continental U.S. EPA expects upwards of 100 operators in Guam and CNMI to attend this valuable training which will cover: operator and management roles, water and wastewater operation and maintenance, development of rates structures, and asset management. This is the first time such training has been brought to the Pacific island territories and is the result of a successful collaboration between HQ OWM and the Pacific Islands Office.

III. Grant Announcements

SF Bay Region 9 plans to soon release new competitive solicitations for projects to protect and restore SF Bay and its watersheds. Since 2008 we have awarded over \$20 million through the SF Bay competitive grant program. The expected total amount of funding to be made available under new solicitations will include \$1 million of remaining FY 2011 funds and up to \$5,847,000 of newly appropriated 2012 funds. Emphasis will be on implementation to restore impaired water quality and improve aquatic habitat.

Earmark Grants The House Appropriations Committee requested an update on all earmark funds in the STAG account including the status of awarded and un-awarded grants as well as information on the spending status of obligated funds. Region 9 is currently managing 148 earmark grants totaling approximately \$90 million. Nearly \$36 million of these funds have been drawn down leaving a balance of approximately \$54 million in active grants. The Agency has 28 un-awarded earmarks totaling nearly \$13 million.

IV. Travel, Public Meetings, and Speaking Engagements

Jan 24-27: RA Jared Blumenfeld is will do a “San Joaquin Valley Whistle Stop Tour.” He will visit a number of facilities and locations that are associated with Region 9’s San Joaquin Valley strategic plan to present priority activities around air, water quality, pesticides, agriculture, and other issues. The RA will then visit various tribes within and around the Fresno County, CA area.

February 1: RA Jared Blumenfeld will speak as the environment area expert for the Full Circle Fund conference in San Francisco. The conference will address current best practices in philanthropy, successful grant making investment strategies, plus opportunities for impact in education, global economic opportunity, environment and energy.

Feb 2-3: RA Jared Blumenfeld will be keynote speaker at the New Partners for Smart Growth conference in San Diego, CA.